

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT O 01491 231620Z

44

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 OMB-01 DRC-01 /133 W

----- 066139

R 231538Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

TO ECSTATE WASHDC 5788

INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS/ PINT, TD, PINR

SUBJECT: T&T OPPOSITION BEGINS TO TAKE FORM

REF: POS 1480, POS A-15 3/16/73

1. THE INTENSE POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN THE RULING PEOPLES NATIONAL MOVEMENT (PNM) SINCE PM WILLIAMS ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL RETURN TO PRIVATE LIFE HAS SPARKED CORRESPONDING ACTIVITY AMONG OPPOSITION GROUPS, WHICH FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS SCENT THE CHANCE OF GAINING POWER. PREDOMINANTLY EAST INDIAN DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (DLP) LEADERS HAVE FLOCKED AROUND THE NEW UNITED DEMOCRATIC LABOUR PARTY (UDLP) ORGANIZED BY ALLOY LEQUAY. LACKLUSTER VERNON JAMADAR OF THE OLD DLP HAS LOST HIS PRINCIPAL SUPPORTERS IN THE UNITY MOVE. RECENT DEFECTIONS FROM THE DLP TOWARD UDLP INCLUDE FORMER DLP SECRETARY GENERAL ROBERT MANSINGH AND JAMADAR'S DEPUTY, DR. RAMESH MOOTOO. THE LEGAL PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION, ROY RICHARDSON'S UNITED PROGRESSIVE PARTY (UPP), HAS APPOINTED MANSINGH TO THE SENATE REPLACING SENATOR ESPINET AND RPNHARDSON

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PAGE 02 PORT O 01491 231620Z

IS EXPECTED TO UNTIE WITH UDLP. ALSO, SIMBOONATH CAPILDEO,

FORMER DLP POLITICAL ACTIVIST AND PRESENT SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PRINCIPAL HINDU RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION, THE SANATAN DHARMA MAHA SABHA, REPORTEDLY SUPPORTS THE UDLP, AS DOES PETER FARQUHAR OF THE MORIBUND LIBERAL PARTY.

2. LLOYD BEST'S TAPIA ORGANIZATION HAS FOLLOWED UP ON ITS ANNIVERSARY ASSEMBLY NOVEMBER 18 WITH A PLANNED MASS MEETING IN PORT OF SPAIN NOVEMBER 24. IT IS PRESENTING A POPULIST PROGRAM HEAVILY LARDED WITH SOCIALISM, CALLING INTER ALIA FOR AN INCREASE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM 36 TO 100, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF 18 TO 25 MUNICIPAL COUNCILS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, AND A FOREIGN POLICY TO END "IMPERIALISM AND COLONIALISM" IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT A "NEW WORLD".

3. AMBASSADOR ASHFORD SINANAN, WHO RETURNED THIS WEEKEND FROM GENEVA IN RESPONSE TO AN APPEAL TO FORM A NEW OPPOSITION PARTY, SO FAR HAS COMMENTED ONLY THAT HE WILL HEAD A COMPLETELY NEW PARTY SHOULD HE DECIDE TO RE-ENTER POLITICAL LIFE. HIS SUPPORTERS HAVE SAID THAT HIS PARTY WOULD NOT ALIGN ITSELF WITH THE UDLP. SINANAN'S SUCCESS AT ORGANIZING YET ANOTHER PARTY WHEN THE OPPOSITION IS COMING TOGETHER IS PROBLEMATIC. HE MAY BE PREVAILED UPON TO JOIN THE UDLP GROUP WHICH COULD BRING IT SOME SUPPORT FROM THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY.

4. IN SPITE OF THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE OTHER GROUPS, THE DEMOCRATIC ACTION CONGRESS (DAC) IS STILL AHEAD IN THE RACE TO ESTABLISH A FUNCTIONING NATIONWIDE OPPOSITION POLITICAL PARTY. DURING THE YEAR IT HAS CONCENTRATED ON GRASS-ROOTS ORGANIZING AND NOW HAS AN EXTENSIVE STRUCTURE WITH CLAIMS OF A PARTY UNIT IN EVERY DISTRICT. DAC LEADERSHIP IS MORE INTER-RACIAL THAN THAT OF THE OTHER PARTIES AND HAS AN APPEAL TO DIFFERING LEVELS OF SOCIETY. WITH ITS ORGANIZATIONAL ADVANTAGE AND BROAD BASED CONSTITUENCY DAC STILL IS THE OPPOSITION PARTY IN BEST POSITION TO CONTEST AN ELECTION NATIONWIDE.

5. IN ADDITION TO THE PARTIES ATTEMPTING TO GAIN POWER THROUGH NORMAL DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES, THE FRINGE GROUPS DEMANDING VIOLENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PORT O 01491 231620Z

RADICAL CHANGE ARE STILL ON THE SCENE. THE DECIMATED NATIONAL UNION OF FREEDOM FIGHTERS (NUFF) HAS ISSUED A NEW MANIFESTO CLAIMING THE EXECUTION OF "POLITICAL INFORMER" MARTIN THOMAS AND PLEDGING TO CONTINUE THE ARMED FIGHT AGAINST "OPPRESSION". (NUFF MEMBER MARTIN IS ALLEGED TO HAVE HELPED POLICE TRACK DOWN GUY HAREWOOD AND WAS SHOT IN AN UNEXPLAINED INCIDENT OCTOBER 23). THE BLACK POWER ADVOCATES OF THE NATIONAL JOINT ACTION COMMITTEE (NJAC) ARE ALWAYS READY TO STIR UP THE

CROWDS BUT HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET IN RECENT MONTHS. A MORE SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO THE ESTABLISHED ORDER MAY COME FROM THE MILITANT TRADE UNIONS LEAD BY GEORGE WEEKES. HE HAS CALLED FOR A "MARCH FOR PEACE, BREAD, AND JUSTICE." DECEMBER 1 AND THREATENED TO PUSH FOR RE-NEGOTIATION OF ALL LABOR-MANAGEMENT CONTRACTS TO COMPENSATE FOR THE HIGHER COST OF LIVING. MARSHALL

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